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# CONFERENCE *connection*

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SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

November 15, 2018

## From the Moderator

*"Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long. (Psalms 25:5, NRSV)"*

The Southeast Conference Board met in Atlanta, early November, to prepare for a New year with a *Transitional Conference Minister (TCM)* in place. We did some collective visioning for what we are seeking in the person who will lead us at this critical juncture in our history and prepared a job description for the position. While I'm not prepared to make an announcement today, in the spirit of transparency promised, please know that we are in conversation with a person for this position. We hope to introduce a TCM by December 5th.



I know that most of us, including me too often, want quick answers to complex issues and challenges. The reality is that God doesn't work according to our human deadlines. My person preference would have been to have a "Conference Minister" in place months ago. However, it was important for the Board to be in continuous prayer, have challenging conversations on expectations we wanted from the person who lead the conference during this time. In the advice of William Culbertson, *"Keep praying, but be thankful that God's answers are wiser than your prayers."*

I do want to share with you The SEC Board's Vision for the person who will be our Transitional Conference Minister: *"The vision of the Southeast Conference BOD is that our TCM will lead the Conference in this time of*

*discernment and transition into a new era of ministry. We believe to accomplish this the TCM will lead the Conference in connecting and re-connecting with each other by actively listening to cultivate a shared mission and ministry. We believe an effective approach uses a supportive process of engaging, assessing, planning, implementing and re-assessing our dreams for the future.” While we wait, my prayer is that God will continue to lead us in God’s truth and teach us.*

On behalf of the SEC/Board and Staff, we pray everyone will have a Happy, Blessed, and Safe Thanksgiving Holiday!

Reverend J R Finney II  
Conference Moderator and Board Chair

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## Our Waiting Space

*A message from Rev. John Vertigan, one of our Consulting Conference Ministers*

A retired minister in the Florida Conference has also been a generous donor of time and dollars to causes he finds worthwhile. It was about a year ago he donated some beautiful benches and chairs for use at our Conference campus where we are also creating a space for a portable labyrinth for prayer and meditation. When I asked him about a dedication for his gift he suggested they might be dedicated to ‘all clergy spouses who wait, and wait, and wait.’ In this dedication, he was remembering with loving fondness his own spouse and the role she played throughout his ministry, a role that often involved waiting, and waiting, and waiting.



I thought of the Southeast Conference today as I remembered that dedication. I took my lunch box out to one of those benches and remembered that they are there for people who wait, and wait, and wait. In true preacher-ly fashion, three things came to mind while I ate my sandwich. I’ll share them with you today....

[Continue reading John's article on our website...](#)

## News from the Conference Office



### Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2018. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers. [Click here to download the entire 2018 prayer list.](#)

#### Week of November 19

- Pilgrimage UCC; Marietta, Georgia
- Woody Clark
- Myrtle Johnson
- Heidi Schuler
- Linda White

#### Week of November 26

- King's Chapel UCC; Alpine, Georgia
- Ashley Cleere
- Robert Johnson
- James Schwarzlose
- Irvin Whitley

Churches in Transition: United Church of Huntsville, Huntsville AL; Garden of Grace, Columbia SC; Emmanuel, Greenville SC; First Congregational, Birmingham AL; Pilgrimage, Marietta GA; First Congregational Christian, Montgomery AL; First Congregational, Savannah GA; Peace Church,



## Clemson SC.



Your SEC UCC Board of Directors met on November 8-10 in Stone Mountain, GA, taking time to plan the future direction of our conference. Attendees were (L to R), Gavin Warren, ACM Heather Fosburgh, Juanita Simmons, Penny Hensley, Sean Kilpatrick, James Harris, JR Finney, Ginnie Ferrell, and Heith Battles.

## News from the Wider Church



## 2019 Winter Youth Retreat Registration Open

Join the UCC Winter Youth Retreat in Blowing Rock, NC. Meet other kids from UCC South and Southeast churches and hear presentations from Keynote Speaker Robyn Henderson-Espinoza. Plus, there's a service project or ski/snowboarding on Sunday. For more information visit the WYR website: [uccwinteryouthretreat.org](http://uccwinteryouthretreat.org).

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## UCC General Synod Website Live

In less than eight months, members of the United Church of Christ will be converging in Milwaukee, Wisc., for the denomination's 32nd General Synod. On Monday, November 12, organizers launched the [2019 General Synod website](http://www.synod2019.org), <http://www.synod2019.org>, and opened [registration](#) and housing for all delegates and visitors of the biennial gathering, taking place June 21-25, 2019 at the Wisconsin Center.



## News from Our Local Congregations



## Circular Church Women's Retreat

Almost 50 women participated in the women's retreat at Edisto Island last weekend. The island has a point and their rented house was placed right on that point. The Friday night activities ended with a dramatic thunder and

lightning storm that came in from the ocean. The ladies sang and ate and made funny hats. They also enjoyed a program that challenged them to name, claim and protect the rituals that enrich our individual and shared lives. The men of Circular Congregational will go on retreat in January.

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## Director of Music Position Available

Pilgrim Congregational Church in Chattanooga is seeking a new director of music. The music director plays both piano and organ in Sunday morning services (and occasional extra services such as weddings, funerals, and special events), directs the church choir, including one night/week rehearsals and Sunday morning warm-up, and coordinates with church ministers and other worship leaders regarding the selection and preparation of music for the services. Minimum salary is \$10,000 annually, commensurate with experience. For more information and all the requirements, contact [PilgrimChattSearch@gmail.com](mailto:PilgrimChattSearch@gmail.com).

## Training and Learning Opportunities

### Save the Date: Annual Retired Servants Retreat

Mark your calendars for Oct 6-9, 2019. That's the Annual Retreat for Retirees and Spouses/Guests of Clergy, Missionaries, Volunteer Workers, and Chaplains of the United Church of Christ Southeast and Southern Conferences. Once again we will be hosted at the wonderful Blowing Rock Conference Center!

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### Ladies, Save the Date: October 18-20, 2019

The 2019 biennial UCC Southern Region Women's Retreat (SRWR) will be hosted by the Church Women of the Southern Conference (CWSC) at Blowing Rock Conference Center (BRCC) in Blowing Rock, NC. This retreat is open to lay and clergy women from the following Conferences: Southern, Florida, South Central and Southeast. Please mark your calendars now...more information to come later. The Rev. Clarice Mitchell, member of Pleasant Hill Community Church, serves as Southeast Conference representative on this planning team.

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## Conference Calendar

**Ordination Service for Kriss Choi**

November 25 @ 11:00 am - 12:30 pm EST

Open Community United Church of Christ, Duluth, GA

**Commission on Ministry Meeting**

November 29 @ 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm EST

Online Virtual Meeting

**Ordination of Mercy Packer-Monroe**

December 2 @ 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm EST

Kirkwood United Church of Christ, Atlanta, GA

**Board of Directors Meeting**

December 4 @ 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm EST

Online Virtual Meeting

**Commission on Ministry Meeting**

January 3, 2019 @ 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm EST

Online Virtual Meeting

**Annual Meeting Planning Session**

January 8, 2019 @ 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm EST

Online Virtual Meeting

**Board of Directors Meeting**

January 10, 2019 @ 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm EST

Online Virtual Meeting

**Winter Youth Retreat**

January 18, 2019 - January 20, 2019

Blowing Rock Conference Center

**MID Retreat**

January 18, 2019 @ 12:00 pm - January 19, 2019 @ 4:00 pm EST

Atlanta, GA

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